

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT

INDC/PV.225

19 August 1965

ENGLISH

SEP 24 1965

GOVERNMENT

DOCUMENTS DIVISION

United Nations Secretariat

FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 19 August, 1965, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS

(Canada)

cdc.65-119

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. A. CORREA do LAGO
Mr. D. SILVEIRA da MOTA

Bulgaria:

Mr. C. LUKANOV
Mr. Y. GOLEMANOV
Mr. T. DAMIANOV
Mr. D. KOSTOV

Burma:

U SAIN BWA
U MAUNG MAUNG GYI

Canada:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS
Mr. J.A. BEESLEY
Mr. C.J. MARSHALL
Mr. P.D. LEE

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. Z. CERNIK
Mr. V. VAJNAR
Mr. R. KLEIN
Mr. F. DOBIAS

Ethiopia:

Mr. A. ZELLEKE
Mr. T. BEKELE

India:

Mr. V.C. TRIVEDI
Mr. K.P. LUKOSE
Mr. S.V. PURUSHOTTAM
Mr. B. AHMED

Italy:

Mr. F. CAVALLETTI
Mr. E. GUIDOTTI
Mr. S. AVETTA
Mr. G.P. TOZZOLI

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (Cont'd)

Mexico:

Mr. A. GOMEZ ROBLEDO

Mr. M. TELLO MACIAS

Nigeria:

Mr. L.C.N. OBI

Mr. O.O. ADESOLA

Poland:

Mr. M. LOBODYCZ

Mr. E. STANIEWSKI

Mr. A. SKOWRONSKI

Mr. R. KRZYZANOWSKI

Romania:

Mr. V. DUMITRESCU

Mr. E. GLASER

Mr. N. ECOBESCU

Mr. P. MATEESCU

Sweden:

Mr. P. LIND

Mr. P. HAMMARSKJOLD

Mr. B. VEGESACK

Mr. U. ERICSSON

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. S.K. TSARAPKIN

Mr. Y.M. VORONTSOV

Mr. S.A. BOGOMOLOV

Mr. G.K. EFIMOV

United Arab Republic:

Mr. A.F. HASSAN

Mr. A. OSMAN

Mr. M. KASSEM

Mr. S. IBRAHIM

United Kingdom:

Lord CHALFONT

Sir Harold BEELEY

Mr. J.G. TAHOURDIN

Mr. T.J. ALEXANDER

PRESENT AT THE TABLE (Cont'd)

United States of America:

Mr. W.C. FOSTER

Mr. C.H. TIMBERLAKE

Mr. D.S. MACDONALD

Mr. P.S. BRIDGES

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

The CHAIRMAN (Canada): I declare open the two hundred and twenty-fifth plenary meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

Lord CHALFONT (United Kingdom): If it were the custom in this Committee to assign distinctive titles to our statements, I would call mine today "Shallows and Miseries". Those of you who are, like our distinguished Soviet colleague, students of Shakespeare will realize at once that the title is not as sombre or as pessimistic as it may sound. It comes, of course, from one of the most familiar speeches in the Shakespearean canon -- the prophetic words of Brutus in Julius Caesar:

"There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries." (Act IV, Sc.3)

I believe, quite simply and without any wish to over-dramatize the dangers, that unless we can stop and set back the nuclear arms race before many more months have passed, we may have little to look forward to but shallows and miseries.

And I believe that the first thing we must do is stop nuclear weapons spreading from country to country. To me one of the most distressing aspects of the present public debate on this issue has been the suggestion in some quarters that this is a false problem, devised by the nuclear Powers to preserve the exclusive nature of their club. The popularity of this theory contains a note of warning that we should not ignore. It means that, we are passing, quickly and perhaps irrevocably, beyond the point at which the spread of nuclear weapons can be stopped. If the non-nuclear Powers of the world, and especially those that are non-aligned, cease to look upon nuclear weapons as an evil and begin to look upon them instead as a symbol of prestige and power, to be acquired or renounced simply on grounds of narrow national expediency, then we shall be lost.

I need hardly remind the Committee that the United Nations has been concerned with the spread of nuclear weapons since before this Committee first assembled in its present form. Six years ago the General Assembly had already recognized in its resolution 1380 (XIV) of 20 November 1959 that:

(Lord Chalfont, United Kingdom)

"... the danger now exists that an increase in the number of States possessing nuclear weapons may occur, aggravating international tension and the difficulty of maintaining world peace, and thus rendering more difficult the attainment of general disarmament agreement."

Two years later the resolution introduced in the General Assembly by the representative of Ireland called for --

"... the conclusion of an international agreement containing provisions under which the nuclear States would undertake to refrain from relinquishing control of nuclear weapons and from transmitting the information necessary for their manufacture to States not possessing such weapons, and provisions under which States not possessing nuclear weapons would undertake not to manufacture or otherwise acquire control of such weapons." (A/RES/1665(XVI))

Two years later -- last summer, in fact -- the same warnings were being sounded here in the Eighteen-Nation Committee. Mr. Zorin said on 2 July 1964:

"Today we begin discussion of the problem of preventing a further spread of nuclear weapons. The imperative necessity and urgency of solving this problem are so obvious that at the present time the overwhelming majority of States are in favour of an appropriate international agreement being concluded as quickly as possible." (ENDC/PV.195, p.5),

and Mr. Lukanov said on 23 July:

"But if we fail to achieve progress now or in the immediate future on the question of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, we shall risk setting back the prospects of successful negotiations not only on this question but also on the question of disarmament in general." (ENDC/PV.201, p.5)

Only three months after this China exploded a nuclear device, and another step had been taken along this miserable road.

It would be a strange comment on all the solemn statements of the past six years if it were now to be suggested that, because we could not stop the spread of nuclear weapons to China, we should despair of trying to stop it at all. Nothing that China has done, or can do in the future, will alter the facts. The spread of nuclear weapons is an unmitigated evil. Each new country that acquires nuclear

(Lord Chalfont, United Kingdom)

weapons adds to the danger that we shall be brought face to face with the prospect of nuclear war -- and sooner rather than later.

It is surely no longer thinkable that decisions of this sort should be left in the field of purely national policy -- that the acquisition or renunciation of nuclear weapons should be simply a matter of moves in the game of power politics among sovereign States and military alliances. This pathetic Clausewitzian view of military power has no place in the age of the nuclear missile -- it has already led to the sort of mistakes that have brought us to our present perilous stage in the arms race. As I have already acknowledged in New York, the idea that nuclear weapons are status symbols or tickets of admission to some powerful and exclusive cabal is largely the fault of the existing nuclear Powers, my country amongst them. But that is no reason for repeating such mistakes now or in the future.

I should like in this context to take a few minutes to comment upon the argument of the representative of India in his statement of 12 August (ENDC/PV.223). As I said at the time, his was a most thoughtful contribution. Indeed, its persuasive clarity makes it all the more necessary that I should take this opportunity to say that there were important implications in his statement which I found profoundly disturbing, and attitudes with which I must, without any equivocation, disagree.

Mr. Trivedi was quite right to ask the rather metaphysical question "'How much further is further?'" (ibid., p.16). The answer quite simply is "No further". It is quite pointless and indeed dangerous, in my opinion, to imply that there may have been a point of no return in the past or, alternatively, that it has not yet been reached. What we have to do is to stop, now, the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons. It is only by doing so that we can create a situation in which existing nuclear armaments can be reduced.

I do not think I shall be giving away any secrets if I say that additions to Russian or to United States nuclear weapon strength, although they may not be welcome, are not of themselves likely to present any immediate danger to world peace. On the other hand, as the representative of Mexico pointed out at our last meeting (ENDC/PV.224, p.30), it needs only one more country to acquire nuclear weapons for the whole situation to change. Once that happens there will be

(Lord Chalfont, United Kingdom)

pressures on other countries that can do so to produce their own nuclear weapons. But, more important, those that cannot do so will seek by every possible means to acquire them from the nuclear countries. The pressures on the nuclear Powers to transfer weapons or control of weapons in pursuit of some illusory balance of power might become irresistible. And if nuclear Powers are tempted to hand over their nuclear weapons in this way they will almost certainly be unable to do so without compensating increases in their own nuclear armoury. And so we shall be in a new and terrifying dimension of the arms race.

The answer, surely, is a non-dissemination agreement. It is simply not enough for the nuclear Powers to undertake obligations on their own. It is, I believe, misleading to talk as Mr. Trivedi talked (ENDC/PV.223, pp. 19, 20) of law-abiders and potential law-breakers; we are all potential law-breakers. Most analogies tend to be misleading, and on this particular reasoning we are asked to assume that once a country acquires nuclear weapons it switches from being a law-abider to being a potential law-breaker. The overtones of this are the same as the overtones of the "nuclear club" phrase: that is, that there are the select, if wicked, few on the one side of the fence and the countless but spotless many on the other.

Although this is a misconception it is not, I suggest, widely shared. This was, I think, well borne out at the Cairo Conference of October 1964. The Heads of State or Government at that Conference, after calling upon the great Powers to abstain from all policies that might lead to the spread of nuclear weapons, declared their own readiness not to produce, acquire or test nuclear weapons, and called on all countries, including those which had not subscribed to the Moscow Treaty, to enter into a similar undertaking. They considered that this undertaking should be the subject of a treaty to be concluded in an international conference convened under the auspices of the United Nations and open to accession by all States (A/5763, p.23).

Nothing has happened since then that seems to me to change the situation or to make the need for action less urgent. I am sure that no one in this room can truthfully maintain that the dangers have become less than they were in October 1964. I do, therefore, most seriously suggest to all members of this Committee that it is better to have a treaty now, even if it has, in the eyes of some of my

(Lord Chalfont, United Kingdom)

colleagues, some flaws, rather than to set our sights too high and fail to get anything. The Moscow partial test ban Treaty was indeed, on any reckoning, a practical demonstration of this.

The Committee has until now confined itself to discussing the desirability of a non-dissemination treaty or, at a further advance, the procedural preliminaries to drafting one. The missing element has been a clearly-formulated draft treaty. As the representative of Sweden, Mrs. Myrdal, pointed out on 10 August:

"As soon as a draft for such an international agreement is forthcoming we shall be able to find out whether what have hitherto been regarded as political hurdles in the way of a joining of stands between the nuclear Powers are about to be overcome, and thus be able to judge how bright the prospects are of their clinching the issue in the near future. We shall then also be able to scrutinize the terms of an eventual treaty in realistic detail and judge its clauses on the merits they will carry for the international community as a whole and also for our individual countries." (ENDC/PV.222, p.13)

The United States has now provided a draft text, (ENDC/152) and with it has come a most valuable opportunity to see whether all of us in this Conference can achieve a sufficient measure of agreement to enable a treaty to be negotiated. I was glad to hear the United States representative point out that the draft before us was, indeed, being offered as a sincere and constructive basis for negotiation. I agree with him that this is exactly what it provides, and on behalf of the United Kingdom I welcome this contribution. The last proposal of comparable importance to come before the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament was that for the partial test-ban Treaty. This was put forward three years ago this month and met with agreement a year later.

I hope that this is a good augury, and I trust that the draft will open the way to serious negotiations. It directly reflects resolution DC/225 of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (ENDC/149), which recommended that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament should accord special priority to the question of a treaty or convention to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and recommended also giving close attention to suggestions for facilitating agreement by adopting a programme of related measures.

(Lord Chalfont, United Kingdom)

As Mr. Foster has said, the draft as it stands incorporates important contributions from Canada, Italy and ourselves. Our over-all preoccupation throughout has been to draft a treaty that will halt the spread of nuclear weapons. Mr. Tsarapkin asked on 17 August (ENDC/PV.224, p.40) whether, in the opinion of the United States, the draft treaty would exclude both direct access by means of national ownership, control and operation and also indirect access by means of the MLF or any similar body. He went on to ask, if I understood him aright, whether on this latter point the treaty would preclude the creation of an MLF in which West German military or non-military personnel would participate.

I shall not anticipate Mr. Foster's answers to these questions, but, on behalf of the United Kingdom, I would point out that the draft before us is concerned with non-dissemination. It is no part of its purpose to place an embargo on all arrangements for sharing the control of nuclear weapons within NATO or any other alliance so far as they are not disseminatory -- and I would emphasize these words, ~~so~~ far as they are not disseminatory.

It is precisely because we, like others, are concerned about this matter that my Government is anxious to eliminate any possibility of dissemination, however theoretical it may seem. Indeed, it is our view that the present draft of articles I and II of the treaty does leave open one possibility, which may well have more theoretical than practical importance but which we would prefer to see closed. Although fairly tightly drafted, these two articles, as we read them, do not rule out the possibility that an association of States might be set up with the capacity to make use of nuclear weapons by the decision of a majority of its members: in other words, without the veto of an existing nuclear Power. It is true that such an association could not, under this draft, come into existence unless one of the existing nuclear Powers had at the same time, or previously, abandoned its independent nuclear capability, so that in any event the total number of nuclear entities would not be increased.

And I am bound to add that my Government is, and will continue to be, irrevocably opposed to any formulation for the Western alliance which might have the effect of making the use of nuclear weapons subject to a majority vote as

(Lord Chalfont, United Kingdom)

distinct from a unanimous vote, or at least a vote in which existing nuclear countries have the power of veto. As for the actual form of words, we would prefer to see the treaty conform with our actual policy as it was stated, for example, by my Prime Minister in the House of Commons last December. (Official Report, 16 December 1964, Vol.704, cols. 418 et seq). In other words, we should like to see dissemination interpreted in the strictest possible way.

I should like to go on, after making these points, to say that the tabling of this text has our full support. For our part we hope that there will be other constructive comments and suggestions on the draft treaty. It would indeed be a miracle if it were flawless and covered the requirements and preoccupations of everyone from the beginning. I do not for one moment believe that what I have suggested is a weakness in the wording of the text as it now stands would justify a refusal by any delegation in the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to enter into negotiations on the basis of this draft. It is both natural and desirable that differing points of view should be expressed and that these should be taken into account with a view to improving the draft where this is possible; and the United Kingdom delegation intends to do its utmost to help forward these negotiations. The Western Powers are resolved to examine, objectively and without prejudice, any suggestions or proposals that might be put forward here by any of the delegations around this table.

I know, for example, that some representatives are concerned about the need for including certain related measures in a non-dissemination treaty. My own view, which I have advanced before, is that we should not attempt too much at one point of attack on the problems of disarmament. Of course the nuclear Powers must demonstrate their sincere resolve to reduce their own nuclear armouries and remove the suspicion of any desire for exclusive club membership. Of course we must examine the implications of guarantees and of safeguards for non-nuclear Powers who enter into a solemn undertaking not to acquire or make nuclear weapons of their own. But I believe we should attack all these problems separately and concurrently; we should not fall into the trap of trying to construct elaborate packages or of making a step forward in one aspect of disarmament await success in another. But if there are countries which still genuinely believe that we can achieve a treaty in which all those related measures

(Lord Chalfont, United Kingdom)

are included, then let us talk about it. That, after all, is what negotiation among equals means.

Finally, I should like to make one more sincere attempt to clarify in my own mind exactly what the fears of Mr. Tsarapkin really are about the MLF and the ANF. He talks of non-nuclear Powers -- especially West Germany -- being given "access" to nuclear weapons. What does this mean? It cannot mean the right to fire nuclear weapons, since this is no part of the plans for any nuclear sharing arrangement within the Western alliance. Does it mean the right to prevent them being fired? That I find very hard to believe. Does it mean the stationing of nuclear weapons on German soil? But they are already there -- no MLF or ANF will change that position. Does it mean solely physical contact between German nationals and nuclear warheads? If so, how does Mr. Tsarapkin reconcile this with the attacks he has also made on Mr. McNamara's proposals for a nuclear committee, which involves no form of physical contact whatsoever?

What does this mysterious imprecise word "access" really mean? I ask this in no spirit of trivial debate. I believe the Soviet Union is genuinely worried and concerned about this issue -- I refuse to believe that it would stand in the way of a non-dissemination agreement for any other reason. I am anxious to know, exactly and without room for confusion, just what these fears are. It is only in this way that they can be met or allayed. We now have a draft treaty upon which we can begin to get down to the serious business of negotiation. In the last analysis, of course, negotiations on an issue of this importance can never be really serious unless the Soviet Union is serious about them. Speaking for Her Majesty's Government, I am prepared to examine any proposal, any amendment, any idea so long as it is directed to the aim of this treaty -- to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons. I hope the Soviet delegation will do the same.

Mr. TRIVEDI (India): I do not wish to take more than a few minutes. I did want to say, however, that I am deeply grateful to Lord Chalfont for the very nice words he has used about my statement. We have great regard for Lord Chalfont and for the work he is doing not only for his own country but for the international community. I am sure that this is reflected in all the comments

(Mr. Trivedi, India)

we make on the important proposals which he makes from time to time. In fact if I may say so, it was a privilege for me to quote from some of the statements he had made when I spoke last. Lord Chalfont expressed some very important and praiseworthy sentiments, particularly in so far as they related to non-nuclear countries; and we shall certainly study the statement he has made today and try to make as constructive a response as possible at a later date.

I thought that at the moment I might correct one misapprehension and one or two misquotations in his statement. He is quite right when he says that we believe that nuclear weapons are evil. We have always believed so; we believed so even when the nuclear Powers were going ahead with their nuclear programmes. We said it from the beginning and we are saying it today. In fact, even when we were not members of the Disarmament Sub-Committee, we told the Disarmament Sub-Committee, and the Commission as well, to stop this mad arms race, to stop the production of these evil weapons. As far as we are concerned, we have said this all throughout, and we say so even today, with all the sincerity at our command, that we want no part of these evil weapons ourselves, even if other people want to continue to maintain their privileges, their monopolies, and to accept evil as a fait accompli. It is eleven years now since we began our nuclear energy programme in 1954, and we have not thought of making any progress along this evil path of a nuclear weapons programme, and we continue to maintain that position.

But I thought there was some misunderstanding in confusing national policies with international instruments. What we said was that if an international instrument is proposed it should be a non-discriminatory instrument, it should be a rational instrument, a logical instrument, and it should be a balanced instrument (ENDC/PV.223, p.14). That is all that we said. It is not a treaty which prevents a country from making bombs or not making bombs. Lord Chalfont referred to the partial test-ban Treaty (ENDC/100/Rev.1), but that did not prevent China from exploding a nuclear weapon device or from not acceding to it. On the other hand, it is the decision of a country, the national will of a country -- as it is the national will of my country -- not to go in for nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Trivedi, India)

As to the misquotations, I did mention the difference between law-abiding elements and law-breaking elements (ENDC/PV.223, p.20); but that was not in the context of nuclear weapons capability; it was in a different context, the context of a proposal to institute controls on peaceful nuclear activities while instituting no control at all over warlike nuclear activities. It referred to nuclear reactors and gaseous diffusion plants. It was in that context that I used that phrase or simile.

Secondly, I am afraid that Lord Chalfont misquoted the Cairo declaration. I think I quoted it in full when I spoke on 12 August (ibid., p.14). The Cairo conferees said that the nuclear Powers should enter into a non-dissemination agreement and should stop the production and proceed to reduction of nuclear armaments (A/5763, p.22). And, as part of those efforts -- I repeat, as part of those efforts -- the non-nuclear Powers expressed their readiness to undertake not to acquire nuclear weapons. There was therefore a certain amount of misquotation of the Cairo declaration and of the decision of the Cairo Conference.

As far as the text submitted by the four delegations (ENDC/152) is concerned, we will have occasion to say more at a later date. I noticed that Lord Chalfont took this opportunity to say how the sponsors of that draft have tried to meet the misgivings of some countries. I do not know whether they have tried at all to meet the misgivings of other countries.

Moreover, Lord Chalfont said that we should not attempt too much. That of course is a very valid sentiment, a very logical approach, a very rational approach. If so, we are prepared to proceed from that position. If the nuclear Powers say that they are not at all prepared at present to eradicate evil from among themselves -- well, that is a valid proposition. But in that event, what we suggest is that too much must not be attempted on the part of the non-nuclear nations alone. If it is not desired to attempt too much, it should be a balanced treaty at a lower level. It does not matter if it is not at a higher or comprehensive level; but at whatever level you try to meet the problem, it should be met on a balanced basis.

(Mr. Trivedi, India)

Finally, Lord Chalfont very rightly said that there should be a concurrent attack on the related problem of what the representative of Mexico called the "extraspacial" aspect of the problem (ENDC/PV.224, p.31), as well as on other related measures. Well, we have seen an attempt made by the four Western Powers on the extraspacial aspect of non-dissemination: we have not yet seen any concurrent attack on the "intraspatial" aspect of the problem (ibid.). I hope we shall see that soon.

The CHAIRMAN (Canada): I call on the United Kingdom representative, who wishes to exercise his right of reply.

Lord CHALFONT (United Kingdom): I shall not take up many minutes of the time of the Committee. The very last thing I want to do is to get involved with Mr. Trivedi in a discussion about quotations and references. I have the very greatest respect for the contribution which he has just made and for the sincerity that obviously lies behind it. At least I think we have got as far as to begin discussion on this most important matter. However, with the greatest respect, I cannot agree that my reference to his earlier speech was misquoted. Certainly it was not misquoted, and I cannot even agree that it was set in the wrong context. If Mr. Trivedi will look again at his most eloquent speech, I think he will see that he was referring to the relevance to a non-dissemination treaty of non-nuclear Powers taking on international obligations, IAEA obligations, on which he commented:

"Reactors engaged in peaceful pursuits, and atomic power stations of the developing countries, do not in themselves pose any threat to the security of the international society." (ENDC/PV.223, p.20)

It was in that context that he drew the analogy between placing law-abiding citizens, that is to say peaceful reactors and power stations, "in custody", and leaving the law-breaking elements, that is the weapon-producing facilities of the nuclear Powers, "free to roam the streets" (ibid., p.19). To my mind, that analogy does imply a distinction between the wicked, or the possessors of nuclear weapons, and the righteous or the virtuous, that is, those using only peaceful reactors. But, as I say, I do not really want to get involved in a semantic discussion with Mr. Trivedi. I suspect I might even lose it.

(Lord Chalfont, United Kingdom)

His reference to my misquotation from the Cairo Conference, I think, was perhaps a little unfair because, in fact, I did not quote, quite deliberately, from the proceedings of the Cairo Conference. I merely drew attention to what seemed to me to be the most salient facts in its report, and to me the important point was, and the point I was trying to make was, that the non-nuclear Powers at that time were evidently prepared to engage in action of their own without setting out any irrevocable conditions about what the nuclear Powers might or might not do simultaneously. But there again, I think this is a matter simply of setting the record straight.

So far as concerns Mr. Trivedi's last point -- concurrent attacks upon all these problems -- of course he is right. We have so far concentrated on getting this most important draft treaty on to the table. We have now achieved something in that line: we have got something to talk about. I hope that while we are talking about it we shall be able to satisfy Mr. Trivedi and, indeed, everyone else around this table that we are equally interested in attacking vigorously and simultaneously all the problems of disarmament and all the problems of the collateral and related measures of disarmament that lie before us.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 225th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of Mr. Burns, representative of Canada.

"Statements were made by the representatives of the United Kingdom and India.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 24 August 1965, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.